technical and commercial losses.

Necessary amendments have also been enacted to the Indian Electricity Act, 1910 to make the theft of electricity a congnizable offence.

In the Common Minimum National Action Plan for Power announced in December, 1996, after consultation with the State Governments, the following measures have been suggested for reduction of transmisison and distribution losses;

(i) Compulsory metering at substations on all major feeders.

(ii) Compulsory metering of all new electricity connections. Also connections to agricultural sector exceeding 10 HP should be completed within a period of two years.

(iii) All electric supplies to be metered by 2002 A.D.

(iv) Compulsory annual energy audit to be ensured in respect of large consumers of more than 100 KVA load.

(v) Time of the day metering would be introduced for big power consumers for better load management.

According to the information furnished by DVB, they have initiated the following actions:

(a) Installation of Electronic Meters for three phase load of 11 KVA and above.

(b) Replacement of defective and burnt meters.

(c) Strengthening of Enforcement Wing with appointment of Inspector General.

(d) Launching of drive against corrupt DVB officials.

Killing of Village Defence Committee Members in Doda

*313. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a few Village Defence Committee members were killed in early May, 1998 in Doda district of Jammu when they encountered the militants;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken to properly arm the defending villagers against militant attacks?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) In an encounter following an ambush set by militants on 4th May, 1998, at Shinky Dessa near village Manchar in Doda district of J&K, 3 Village Dfence Committee members had lost their lives and 2 sustained injuries out of which one succumbed to his injuries later. One militant was also killed. Reinforcements were sent and on 5th May, 1998, while the Reinforcement party was returning alongwith the dead bodies they were attacked by the militants near Anchal (Doda). In the resultant encounter 5 persons including one police personnel lost their lives and 2 village Defence Committee Members sustained injuries.

(c) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects and it is the State Government which provides weapons to the Village Defence Committees. Government of India are, however, extending all possible assistance to the State in fighting the militancy by providing them Central forces, funds and in helping them to acquire sophisticated weaponry and equipment etc. The State Government has also been requested to strengthen the Village Defence Committees and provide them better training, weapons and equipment as also support from the police and security forces. The State Government has reported that in addition to providing arms and ammunition to the Village Defence Committees, licenses for

acquiring guns are being issued to villagers in remote areas to fight the militants and for self-defence.

Reimbursement of Security Related Expenditure

*314. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of security related expenditure reimbursed by Government to the terrorist affected States/Union Territories during the last five years, State-wise;

(b) the names of States to whom Government committed to reimburse the expenditure incurred during this period, alongwith the amount and period involved; and

(c) the reasons for unreasonable delay in reimbursement of such dues to Assam and by which time it will be reimbursed?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) Government of India has reimbursed Rs. 781.40 crores as security related expenditure to the State of Jammu & Kashmir during 1993—98.

In the case of Punjab, no security related expenditure was reimbursed. However, it was decided to write off repayment obligation of the State for the balance unpaid instalments of principal and interest for the years 1997—2000 pertaining to the Special Term Loans given during the period 1984-85 to 1993-94 for combating insurgency and militancy in the State.

In the case of Assam, Government of India has reimbursed Rs. 131.91 crores in 1997-98 as full and final settlement for the period 1990—95.

Government is also committed to reimburse the security related expenditure in respect of the North Easter States with effect from 1.4.95.

(c) Further reimbursement of security related expenditure to Assam would be made after the guidelines for reimbursement of security related expenditure are approved by the Central Government and funds provided in the Budget.

Deaths of Santhal Community in Kokrajhar

*315. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of women and children of Santhal Community died in the relief camp in Kokrajhar, Assam, during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details and reasons for such large number of deaths in the relief camp;

(c) whether the supply of food and medicines were inadequate leading to hunger and disease; and

(d) whether Government have taken any steps to advise the State Government to occasionally monitor the relief operations?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the Government of Assam, the number of women and children died in the relief camps from 1996 till date is as follows:—

Women	: 89
Children	: 232

(c) No Sir.

(d) Yes Sir. A Parliamentary team also visited the refugee camps in June 1997 and advised the State Government about the relief operations.

Action Plan to Combat Naxalite Violence

*316. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had convened a meetings of the Chief Minister of four States in Hy-